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L'Sana Djahspora.txt

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1 SCOPING MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED CANADIAN
2 NATIONAL RAILWAY COMPANY ACQUISITION OF THE
3 ELGIN, JOLIET AND EASTERN RAILWAY COMPANY

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CHIMNIAK REPORTING & VIDEO

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Surface Transportation Board

CN-EJ&E EIS - FD-35087

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MR. DJAHSPORA: First name is

L-apostrophe-S-a-n-a. Last name is

D-j-a-h-s-p-o-r-a. I'm Gary a resident.

4 well, first of all, I did want to
5 record my concern this even. The format, even
6 though it's good in terms of being able to go
7 around and see illustrations freely, I don't
8 think the format facilitates the kind of
9 information as accessible to a lot of our
10 constituents who I think if they came here might
11 be looking for something more direct in terms of
12 a presentation and the dialogue or whatever, so a
13 meeting where there's a little more kind of a
14 direct and substantive dialogue is something that
15 I'm hoping that we will have an opportunity for
16 not too far down the line in this process. In
17 general that's just about the format.

18 My concern fall under a lot of the
19 headings that they have there. In particular,
20 say, the environmental justice. And I'm
21 concerned about an area like Gary, Gary East
22 Chicago area in general already with a lot of
23 stress factors in terms of the quality of life
24 here. And these definitely raise the level of

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1 stress factors with respect to the physical
2 impacts of increased traffic and the length of
3 traffic, that kind of thing. It's kind of a
4 long-standing issue, you know, in this community.

5 Then we talk about traffic that
6 admittedly is going to be carrying hazardous
7 waste. We should not underplay the significance
8 of that. In the end I go back to my point about
9 the opportunity for some substantive dialogue on

10 that matter because when you talk about
11 environmental justice, there's a whole matter of,
12 you know, the equitable or inequitable sharing of
13 the burdens of dealing with things like hazardous
14 waste material, toxic waste, and of course as the
15 record shows communities like ours in Gary bear a
16 disproportionate burden in that respect, so, you
17 know, those are additional factors in a community
18 that is already severely under stress in some
19 ways economically in terms of environment and so
20 forth. So when you look the the prospect and you
21 always have to consider that in terms of the
22 prospect what impact would a mishap have, it's
23 the kind of thing that could be a tipping point,
24 you know, for a community like ours already on

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1 the brink in terms of stresses on this
2 environment.
3 So, in general I mean as I look at
4 this, it seems to be something really designed --
5 I mean I see much more benefit for the people on
6 the other side of the border basically Chicago
7 because it's a shift from traffic that would be
8 going down there to basically, you know, just
9 kind of sending it around, you know, out in the
10 surrounding areas. And I can't speak to the
11 realities in every one of those areas. I don't
12 know all of those communities, but here, yeah,
13 certainly it's added stresses, it's added
14 negatives for us.

15 I don't see where they're really
16 demonstrating the real economic benefit in terms
17 of a trade-off, you know, for us, I mean, and you
18 have to consider those in that regard. I'm not
19 seeing that.
20 I certainly can see the benefit to
21 Chicago. Downtown Chicago. But not necessarily,
22 you know, to us. And again that's something I
23 would hope to get a better feel for with some
24 substantive dialogue. So I -- one of the reps

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1 mentioned that there may be another meeting after
2 they get a little farther along in the draft. I
3 insisted that she think of that in terms of there
4 will be another meeting, not may, because again
5 this is a community that for very good reason,
6 you know, feels slighted in a lot of ways with
7 respect to these kinds of things and you should
8 not continue that pattern.

9 There should very definitely be that
10 other meeting and not too far down the line in
11 this whole process.

12 Those are some general concerns. And
13 I would just say basically in looking at what I'm
14 seeing here, it doesn't alleviate any of those
15 concerns. I mean, it just kind of makes them
16 more -- heightened, you know, my concern, you
17 know. That's basically what I found as I looked
18 through the information and talked to people and
19 so forth. I'll stop with that.

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